How The Oligarchy Continues to Rule The Senate, P. 4

The WSPers and The Anti-Negro Nazi: When Is Contempt of Congress Mere Peccadillo? Page 2

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The No. 1 Business of Mankind

There is a poem of Robinson Jeffers in which he likens the struggles of nations to the waves and tides of the sea, and sees in them as little meaning. This comes to mind as one watches the new crisis shaping up in Southeast Asia over Indonesia and Malaysia. It is a mistake to view it through the stereotyped spectacles of either the cold war or anti-colonialism. It is better seen as another example of the endless anarchy to which the world will be subject as long as clashing national aspirations are left to be determined by organized murder. In this area Western imperialism is ebbing and far older forms of imperialism, Chinese and Malay, are reviving. No sooner is one clash resolved when another takes its place, as in waves breaking upon a beach. In perspective, the area is one in which the Malay peoples were conquered by Spain in the Philippines, by Holland in the Indonesian archipelago and by Britain in the Malay peninsula. We pushed the Spaniards out of the first and took over from the Dutch in the second, though in a much weaker form, and are now being asked for military aid to maintain the British in Malaysia.

Why The U.S. Plays It Cool

From Sukarno's point of view Malaysia is a neo-colonialist device to maintain British bases in Southeast Asia, and to prevent the reunion of the Malay peoples. From the standpoint of the Malays in Malaysia, this Federation is a way to assure Malay predominance over Singapore, which is one of the great Chinese communities of the world. From the standpoint of Singapore, where the majority party is moderate, Socialist and Chinese, Malaysia is preferable to rule by Indonesia where some 2,000,000 Chinese have been exposed to mob violence, legal discrimination and loss of property because they dominate the economic life of 100,000,000 Malays. For England, Malaysia, to which she transferred Singapore, Sarawak and North Borneo only 18 months ago, is a device for keeping this area rich in rubber, tin and oil in the sterling bloc, and maintaining the last lifeline of its empire East of Suez from Singapore to Hongkong. The U.S. is as cool about Britain's troubles with Sukarno as it was about Holland's. For we emerged from Sukarno's struggle against the Dutch with the major share of $1 billion in Western oil investments in Indonesia and in the quarter billion annual trade in Indonesian oil. America's greatest oil interests (Stanvac, Caltex) are fearful of offending Sukarno lest he expropriate their properties. We have also become Indonesia's No. 1 supplier; in trade with the archipelago, we rank ahead of Japan, Communist China and West Germany, in that order. From the standpoint of the cold war, both Washington and Moscow have been swindled; they bid against each other in offering Sukarno foreign aid; we played for the army, Moscow for the Indonesian Communist Party. The latter has turned up in Peking's corner, and the Army likes the war against Malaysia. (In Malaysia, too, the war threat, in the immemorial bloody comedy of international relations, has strengthened "unity"). Our nightmare has been the fear that Sukarno would seize our oil companies and sell the oil to Communist China. That seems to be coming closer. Peking is winning out over both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., though Sukarno has always talked of his great role in "containing" China. Once Western imperialism is out of the area, the next clash will be between Malay and Chinese. This endless vista, which began in the era of bow-and-arrow, looks less and less attractive in the era of the atom bomb.

Never was a world order more urgent. Yet this is the moment at which Indonesia becomes the first nation to resign from the United Nations. Sukarno's walkout and our exclusion of China means that three quarters of a billion human beings are now outside the community of nations in the Far East. Its authority survives there only on the fringes. Indonesia's withdrawal recalls its analogue 32 years ago when Japan, condemned for aggression in Manchuria, became the first nation to walk out of the League of Nations, setting an example Hitler Germany was soon to follow. We know the consequences. The recollection should make the preservation of the UN the No. 1 business of mankind.

The Cost of Empire

The decline in U.S. gold holdings and weakened confidence in the dollar are due largely to our far-flung military commitments abroad. Foreign aid has little to do with the gold crisis. It is largely a disguised subsidy for U.S. business, agriculture and arms manufacturers. All the military aid we send abroad, and more than 80% of the non-military, is purchased here. The dollar outflow is due to our foreign bases, our troops in Germany and Korea and wars like Vietnam. These eat up our huge surplus of exports over imports. In 1963 our export surplus was $5 billion but we had a balance of payments deficit of $2.6 billion. If it were not for our $2.9 billion military expenditure abroad that year, we could have had a $300 million surplus. Similarly in 1964, despite a $2 billion rise in our export surplus, the payments deficit will be at least $2.3 billion. Without $2.9 billion in military expenditure abroad, we would have had a net gain of $600 million. The dollar has been weakened by two decades of trying to impose our will on much of the world; this is the cost of empire. The French economy on the other hand has been so strengthened by the "loss" of Indochina, Algeria and once-French Africa that De Gaulle can shift his reserves from the unsteady dollar to the revived franc, exchanging his huge dollar holdings for gold and thus adding to U.S. money troubles.

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WSP-ers Can Go to Jail for A Year But A Nazi Need Only Forfeit $20 Deposit

When Contempt of the House of Representatives Is Treated As A Peccadillo

If a Negro had broken into the House on opening day and launched a tirade before he could be ejected, you may be sure that there would have been a major outcry, an exhaustive inquiry into how security was breached, and a severe penalty imposed on the interloper. But the Nazi who broke into the House on opening day in blackface, with a fur loincloth around his leotards, to insult the Negro people during the Mississippi challenge, was allowed to go free after forfeiting a $20 deposit for disorderly conduct. The intrusion was treated as a peccadillo.

Since this Nazi was pandering to white supremacist sentiment, we are not surprised that dominant Southern elements in the House took the affair lightly. But we are surprised that not one of the five Negro Representatives rose to protest.

One of 20 Such Incidents

It was left to Congressman Charles S. Joelson, *D., N.J.*, to urge action. In a letter to the District of Columbia Corporation Counsel he called attention to the fact this was only one in a series of some 20 incidents in which Rockwell's Nazis have caused disorder at public meetings but have gone unscathed except for a $10 disorderly conduct fine. Joelson's letter called for prosecution. Joelson also introduced a resolution asking the House to punish the intrusion for contempt.

The resolution has about as much chance of getting out of committee as Howard Smith has of being decorated by the NAACP. The indifference of the House to so plain a breach of decorum and security came forcibly to mind when we watched the arraignment later in the week of Dagmar Wilson, Donna Allen and Russell Nixon for contempt of the House Un-American Committee. Here a mere refusal to testify in secret, though not in public, was treated as if it were a major crime. The three were set down for trial respectively on March 1, 8 and 15; and taken down to the cell blocks to be finger-printed.

Even if they win, the victory will cost months of anguish and heavy legal fees. Win or lose, these two members of Women's Strike for Peace and the general manager of the *National Guardian* will be punished—all because they refused to answer questions in secret about a visit to the State Department where they requested a visa for a distinguished Japanese professor and crusader against nuclear war. The net effect is to make people wary of taking part in peace activity.

Their "contempt" of the House was theoretical. The contempt shown by the Nazi interloper was immediate and real He gets off by forfeiting $20 deposit for disorderly conduct; they could go to jail for a year and be fined as much as $1,000.*

One way to express a sense of outrage is to write your Congressman (1) to support the bill submitted on opening day by Edwards (*D.* Cal.) with the support of Ryan (*D. N.Y.*) and Moorhead (*D. Pa.*) for abolition of the Un-American committee and transfer of any legitimate function to House Judiciary and (2) to vote against the committee's appropriation when it comes before the House. The vote will be the measure of the country's concern for political freedom.

Civilization's Defenders in The Congo

"Stanleyville, the Congo, Jan. 6—A cold war has broken out here between the United Nations and Premier Moise Tshombe's mercenary fighters. . . . The first [incident] came just 48 hours after the mercenaries drove into town following the Belgian paratroop attack Nov. 24. 'They burst into the PX in our headquarters at the Hotel Wacenia and walked off with $24,000 worth of food, whiskey, clothing and other goods,' Mr. [Fernand] Scheller ["the Swiss UN representative here"] said. 'You know that the rebels never touched the PX during the four months they were here, but the mercenaries grabbed the stuff within two days. . . . They've looted everywhere they can,' he declared, 'they've broken open every safe in town except two, and stolen millions of francs. They've looted stores, taken refrigerators, typewriters and every piece of equipment they could get their hands on.'"

—J. Anthony Lukas in New York Times, Jan. 7.

*** At press time we learned that D. of C. Corp. Counsel Chester Gray had written Rep. Joelson agreeing with him and ordering the forfeiture set aside and the Nazi tried.**

Conflicting U.S. and British Views of Castro's Cuba on Its 6th Birthday

"Fidel Castro has begun his 7th year, but there is no joy in this for anybody. . . . He holds on because he runs a police state."

—"Cuba's Six Year Nightmare", editorial, Washington Daily News (and other Scripps-Howard papers) Jan. 6.

"What's life like in Cuba? It resembles Europe in 1945. There is no bomb damage but thanks to the American blockade . . . there are all the other symptoms—food rationing, clothes rationing, empty shop windows . . . shabby offices. . . . Wages are comparatively high, and far more fairly apportioned than 'before', but there is little that is off ration and available to buy with them. . . .

"How do people think? In spite of all this austerity and the feeling that there is no real prospect of a change, the Americans delude themselves in believing the population is ripe for revolt. The Cubans are a proud people and while regretting the material benefits of the old days (in the case of those who profited from them), they would not want to return to their former dependence. Of course, they are dependent on what they call the Socialist countries, but materially only, not psychologically. They feel it is their revolution. . . .

"There is surprisingly little unthinking anti-Americanism. . . . Radio Miami and the Voice of America are regularly listened to (though rather in the spirit that Britons listened to Lord Haw Haw). . . . The permanent circumnavigation of the island by an electronically-equipped U.S. warship and the regular reconnaissance flights of a U-2 are subjects for humor. . . . What do they think about Castro? He is still extremely popular, though far from being beyond criticism, except in print. Everyone, including government officials, refers to him as Fidel. . . . Does the country seem like a military dictatorship? Not in the least. . . . They need Fidel, who is to Cubans what Churchill and the monarchy combined were for Britain in the Second World War. It is frightening to contemplate what might happen to Cuba if anything happened to Fidel. One thing is certain, though: it could not be a return to the days 'before'."

—J. Halcro Ferguson, Latin American expert of the London Observer, writing from Havana to that paper, Jan. 3.

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LBJ Quit Smoking After Heart Attack But Won't Tell Public It's Hazardous

Health Message Recommends Medical Aid for Young As Well As Old

Amidst the dazzling array of health proposals which the President sent Congress last week there was one that promises a wiser direction in health policy. The Kennedy health program focused almost exclusively on health care for the aged. President Johnson has added a new dimension by recommending the expansion of the Kerr-Mills program for the aged to include medical and dental care for children in medically needy families. A more liberal federal-state formula for participation would overcome the major weakness of the present Kerr-Mills. The proposal still falls far short of President Truman's goal of comprehensive health care for every American, but it is a long-delayed step in that direction.

It takes on added significance because of the influential role that Wilbur Cohen, Assistant Secretary of HEW, played in drafting the health proposals. Cohen is known to favor the expansion of Kerr-Mills to all ages and all but the highest income levels. This route to universal health care would have at least two advantages over a similar expansion of medicare. Kerr-Mills is more progressive because it is financed out of the general tax fund, not by a flat tax on wages. Its benefits are also more comprehensive; they can cover all medical expenses, whereas medicare is limited to hospital-centered bills. If expansion of Kerr-Mills is President Johnson's long-range goal, he deserves enthusiastic support.

Where Medicare Is Deficient

The President's medicare program is less encouraging. The Democrats' improved position in Congress and especially on the House Ways and Means Committee offered the opportunity for a more comprehensive bill. Benefits to cover the cost of long-term illness might have been added. There are practically none in the present King-Anderson bill, although more than four out of five of the elderly suffer from at least one chronic disease. Benefits covering out-of-hospital drugs, doctor services or even annual check-ups might have been added, but the President did not do so. The one step forward was the elimination of the "dynamic cost sharing plan" which had been added to the Senate-passed bill last August. It would have made the elderly responsible for paying the major part of increased hospital costs, which are rising at the rate of 7% a year. In place of "cost-sharing" there has been substituted a deduction equivalent to the average cost of one day's hospital care. This too will be a substantial burden. One day's care now costs $40 and this will double within ten years.

An even greater disappointment was the President's continued silence on the hazards of cigarette smoking. (He has not smoked since his heart attack.) In its recent report the President's Commission on Heart Disease, Cancer and Stroke noted that "reduction of cigarette smoking offers great possibilities for the prevention of illness, disability and premature death, with regard to both cancer and cardiovascular disease." The Commission recommended a three-year, $10 million program of public education and a network of smoking control clinics to assist those who wish to give up smoking. There was no word of this in the President's message. It did contain recommendations for the protection of consumers' health, including a provision for more adequate labeling of hazardous substances. A White House aide, when asked whether this applied to cigarette packages and advertising, could give only an embarrassed "No."

Landrum and Medicare

The House Ways and Means Committee has dominion over political privilege in the House and economic privilege in the country. It presides over all tax legislation and its Democratic members decide all Democratic committee appointments. The "election" of Phil Landrum (D. Ga.) to this committee, thanks to sly footwork by Speaker McCormack, is a major setback for medicare and every other liberal reform bill that comes before the committee. Landrum is being touted as a liberal, but he's not. Congressional Quarterly last November ranked him more conservative than six other members of the 10-man Georgia delegation. His support of the Poverty Bill last year now looks like the bargain price he paid for his seat on Ways and Means. He has promised not to block medicare in committee but he is not committed to voting for it on the floor or strengthening it in the future. He has seniority over the two new liberal appointments, which means that they will be the first to go when the Democrats lose seats in the House. Medicare will get through because of Republican votes, but when these side with the 7 Dixiecrats, they will still control the Ways and Means Committee.

Ex-Madison Ave. Ad Man Advises Tobacco Companies to "Taper Off" on Cigarettes

Less than a week after the President's health message appeared minus any allusion to the dangers of cigarette smoking, the National Interagency Council on Smoking and Health issued its own health report at a meeting in Washington. The Council is made up of the nation's leading health agencies including the U.S. Public Health Service. "The emerging medical opinion," said Emerson Foote, the Council's chairman, "is not that cigarette smoking seriously damages the health of some people who practice it, but that [it] damages the health of most people who continue to smoke." It kills at least 125,000 Americans every year, he said, and perhaps as many as 300,000. Foote, an ex-Madison Ave. magnate, then offered the tobacco companies some expert advice: Abandon all cigarette advertising and use this $200 million a year to develop non-tobacco products.

Cigarette makers ought to see the wisdom in this. They have been trying to convince consumers and stock market investors that cigarette consumption is back to normal, but it isn't. If it were, cigarette sales would have to be 3% to 4% ahead of 1963 because of the increase in the smoking-age population. Instead sales are still below their 1963 level. The Surgeon General told the Council that one out of every 4 men smokers has quit in the last ten years. So did 1.2 million women last year.

Remember the Cigarette Advertising Code by which the industry was going to eliminate the more perverse appeals in its ads? Sen. Neuberger (D. Or) told the Council that the Code's supervisors have ordered an end to all tar and nicotine statements on cigarette packages. These were a major incentive to the development of safer cigarettes.

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Clark's Attack on Southern Oligarchy Voted Down Even In A Secret Ballot

The Senate Establishment Makes A Strategic Retreat, But Retains Control

Senator Clark's long campaign against the Senate Establishment began to pay off this year. He has aimed at its heart, the Southern oligarchy's control of the Democratic steering committee which determines the size and ratio of committees and assignments to them. This year, for the first time, the oligarchy no longer felt secure enough to hold up the assignments until after the biennial assault on the filibuster. In the past, freshmen Democratic Senators have been put on notice that they would only get the choice assignments they wanted if they voted right. This time committee assignments were handed out in advance of the filibuster fight, which has been put off until March.

Three Powerful Northern Chairmen

What happened is that three powerful Northern chairmen, McNamara of Public Works, Magnuson of Commerce and Jackson of Interior, in effect joined forces with Clark by sending out a letter in December to Democratic Senators declaring the steering committee unrepresentative of the party. They asked that four new members be added, one each for the East and the Far West, two for the Middle West, enlarging it from 15 to 19 members. Pastore later joined in this call, which would have given the North 10-to-9 control of the committee.

But pressure from Majority Whip Mansfield, as always for compromise, and the election of Russell Long as whip seems to have frightened these chairmen into retreat. In caucus they asked for only two new members, leaving the South in control 9-to-8.* Clark's motion for four new members was voted down 34 to 22—in a secret ballot, without fear of reprisal from the oligarchs. This vote is the real index of how few Democratic Senators really want a democratic Senate.

*** Actually the Southerners on the steering committee can almost always count on Hayden (Arizona) and Bible (Nev.) and often on Mansfield (Mont.) and Dodd (Conn.). There were only three real liberals on it: Douglas, Clark and Williams (N.J.) to which have now been added McNamara and McCarthy. The committee would have to be enlarged to 25, with 8 more liberals, to be sure of outvoting the conservatives.**

Troubles We Must Talk About

There used to be a series of advertisements which used the tag line, "troubles people don't talk about." One of the political troubles Americans don't talk about, lest this seem like bigotry, is the power of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to block action on birth control and public education. President Johnson touched the sensitive nerve of the birth control issue when he became the first President who dared to refer to it in his State of the Union message. Though the reference was vague—"I will seek new ways," the President said, "to use our knowledge to deal with the explosion in world population and the growing scarcity in world resources"—it has already brought an alarmed protest from the Family Life Bureau of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and a reminder that the U.S. hierarchy opposed any public aid for birth control in 1959. This, and the hierarchy's stand on aid to education, will have to be fought out in the open. And one thing which needs to be said loud and clear is that Catholic education in the parochial schools and universities is generally inferior education, on a low cultural level and politically reactionary.

As in the House, where the Rules committee often provides a convenient graveyard for measures on which supposed liberals want to evade a vote, so it is handy in the Senate to let conservative control of key committees remain the excuse for burying militant liberal proposals.

It is indicative that Long—highly overrated as a "Populist"—had his way on the powerful Finance committe on which he is nominally No. 2 man but chairman in all but name. On his insistence, Finance was the only committee on which the ratio of Democrats to Republicans was unchanged. This ensured conservative control over vital money matters from taxes to oil and gas depletion allowances.

The caucus and the steering committee were shaken up enough, however, to get stepchild liberals some good committee assignments. Clark and Pell went on Foreign Relations; Yarborough on Appropriations; Mrs. Neuberger on Commerce and Nelson on Labor.

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